

Knowledge Management Within Organisations: Some Findings From UK Case-Studies

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ABSTRACT

In this day and age, an employee's knowledge is considered an asset that should be utilised efficiently by the company to remain competitive. This paper discusses the different strategies employed by four UK based organisations in managing their employees' knowledge for more efficient and effective utilisation. Through this research, it was discovered that the companies are managing knowledge through the implementation of a variety of policies and procedures, soft-skills management as well as some technological support. In conclusion, this paper presents possible points of interest regarding the different strategies organisations could utilise in managing knowledge that exists within their companies.

Keywords

Knowledge Management Strategies.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this day and age, globalisation has been playing a large part in the accelerated pace of technological innovation that has made information a key ingredient in the success of organisations. Firms are harnessing knowledge as their primary source of growth, utilising knowledge as their main commodity. Due to the economic changes that have been occurring recently, companies have to strive hard in order to survive in this highly competitive situation. Organisations have to continuously adapt faster or else they will be naturally weeded out in the economic evolutionary process (Harrison & Leitch, 2000). Innovation is now a crucial aspect of company strategies. Creativity as well as adaptability is important for the survival of the organisation and therefore, management styles need to change in order to recognise the growing need to manage knowledge workers differently from traditional management practices. This would help to maximise the potential of the organisation's employees in order to increase their productivity and output of skills and intellectual capability.

Managing knowledge, or knowledge management (KM), is also about people whose assets are the knowledge that they have in their heads. People who are flexible, can adapt quickly to changing environments and can take the initiative to utilise knowledge are therefore becoming more in demand by organisations. Alvesson (1993) also states that the idea of knowledge-intensive organisations is gaining a large interest in the past few years. A recent KPMG survey of 100 leading UK firms found that a staggering 43% of respondents are undertaking some kind of KM initiative (Scarborough & Swan, 2001). According to Harrison & Leitch (2000), Puddy, Price & Smith, (2001) and Du Toit (2003), national governments and international agencies are increasingly recognising that the emergence of knowledge-based economies has profound implications for the determinants of growth, the organisation's production and its effect on employment and skill requirements.

The companies are realising that knowledge workers do not just manipulate knowledge; they acquire, modify and create knowledge that would be beneficial to the organisation. Furthermore, the companies are recognising the need to identify their knowledge workers' ability, knowledge and skills in order to remain competitive. This need gives rise to a new management strategy within organisations which looks at managing the knowledge that exists within the organisation so that it would be utilised efficiently and effectively. This is possibly because companies are beginning to recognise the importance of knowledge within their organisation and "*since all companies use and sell knowledge in some form or other, knowledge management is a crucial component of corporate strategies*" (Wikström & Normann, 1994, p. 71).

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

What is knowledge? According to the Oxford Dictionary (1997), knowledge is defined as "(i) awareness, familiarity; (ii) person's range of information, understanding (of subject); (iii) information; (iv) sum of what is known" (pg. 419). It is the second definition that this paper is mainly focusing on i.e. the person's range of information or understanding of a particular subject, especially within

the context of an organisation. It has been suggested by Blackler (1993) that there are a variety of definitions of knowledge varying from socially constructed, often tacit, material and resilient to acquired through participation within communities of practice. In addition, Hope & Hope (1997) say that knowledge consist of people's skills, competencies, ideas, and intuitions along with the full utilisation of information and data. Therefore, knowledge is presumed to be the key to understanding society as well as the technological developments taking place within it (Augier & Vendelo, 1999).

However, Sbarcea, (2001) explains knowledge as a free-moving entity that has an active social life that is always changing and in a constant state of flux whereby knowledge flows between and across organisational boundaries. An interesting thing to note is that knowledge is a non-consumable resource - it is possible to use knowledge without using it up. Thus, the more knowledge is used, the more there is of it (Augier & Vendelo, 1999). Therefore, organisations can acquire, create, store and maintain, and export knowledge as a product. However, Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) classify that knowledge is found in two forms i.e. tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge. According to them, explicit knowledge is something formal and systematic and that can be expressed in words and numbers. It can be documented, archived and codified, often with the help of IT (Newell, Scarbrough & Swan, 2001). Furthermore, it can be easily communicated and shared in the form of hard data, scientific formulas, codified procedures or universal principles. It can also reside in manuals, policies and procedures as well as in individuals and group skills. However, tacit knowledge is somewhat more complicated. Nonaka and Takeuchi express tacit knowledge as something not easily visible and expressible. It is highly personal and hard to formalise, making it difficult to communicate or to share with others. It is embodied in people's thinking and experiences which also includes subjective insights, intuitions and hunches that therefore make it something that is deeply rooted in an individual's actions as well as value that s/he embraces. In the KM process, organisations are trying to extract tacit knowledge from their employees and utilise, as well as retain that knowledge within the organisation in the form of explicit knowledge.

To utilise knowledge efficiently, it is important to understand what KM is. McKinlay (2000) states that there is much more to KM than simply storing information and that managing knowledge also relies upon the ordering, normalising and reflection of information. At the most basic level, managing knowledge is how an organisation acquires, creates, applies, stores and disseminates knowledge. KM is also about people whose assets are the knowledge that they have in their heads. According to Hope & Hope (1997), 50-90% of a firm's value is created through its

management of human capital. Moreover, KM is based on identifying the organisational positions and chronological moments at which individual and organisational learning is greatest in scope, depth and intensity (McKinlay, 2000). However, KM is not easy to define and many definitions supplied in the literature are very vague. There is no simple 'single view' or 'single definition' within which all the aspects of KM can be examined and therefore, knowledge is beginning to be understood as an integration of multiple perspectives (Wainwright, 2001). The ambiguity of the concept, however, is itself a clue to the fashion-setting possibilities of this discussion. *"Ambiguity makes Knowledge Management amenable to multiple interpretations and remouldings which potentially extend its relevance across different communities of practice"* (Scarbrough & Swan, 2001, p. 3). Offsey (1997) attempts to define KM as *"the broad processes of locating, transferring and more efficiently using information and expertise within an enterprise"* (p. 113) while Santosus & Surmacz (2001) state that KM is the process through which organisations generate value from their intellectual and knowledge based assets i.e. the knowledge worker. Truch (2001) describes the organisational processes that relate to KM in slightly more detail as processes that govern the creation, dissemination, and utilisation of knowledge. However, Truch (2001) mentions that as long as we accept the premise that KM is concerned with the entire process of discovery and creation, dissemination, and the utilisation of knowledge, then we are strongly driven to accept that KM is much more than a 'technology thing'.

KM as a means to capture and transfer knowledge is another definition put forth by Loshin (2001), Wickramasinghe and Mills (2002), and Du Toit (2003) who define KM as the process of capturing organisational data and information, filing and categorising the data while turning it into usable, accessible information which is then transmitted, analysed as well as communicated to others. This definition is slightly similar to the definition presented by Ellingsen and Monteiro (2003) who state that vast bodies of knowledge representation cannot be maintained in full and it is only selective representations of knowledge that can be moulded into working knowledge within an organisation through specific organisational processes. Bertels and Savage (1999) mention that KM is an audit of "intellectual assets" that highlights unique sources, critical functions and potential bottlenecks that hinder knowledge flows to the point of use. KM also protects intellectual assets from decay, seeks opportunities to enhance decisions, services and products through adding intelligence, increasing value and providing flexibility (Bertels & Savage, 1999).

However, knowledge would not be of much value if it is not shared and passed around the organisation. Knowledge can reside wholly within an individual, can

be shared within a group or the organisation as a whole (Roos & van Krogh, 1992). An organisation that is constantly developing new knowledge and focusing its pooled efforts towards the achievement of the shared organisational goals and values would be a more formidable competitor than an organisation where the employees are focusing on their own personal career development (Brown & Woodland, 1999).

One thing that has to be remembered is that knowledge work is complex. This complexity may be related to the amount of depth of knowledge involved or to the level of interdependence between work components that would make it difficult to predict how change in one area will affect other areas. Therefore, running an organisation today requires the employees to expect the unexpected and increasingly it is these employees who utilise their knowledge to control the marketplace (Du Toit, 2003) as well as manage the overall knowledge base within the company.

Knowledge about an organisation or industry is an intellectual asset that, although paid for in part by the employer, is difficult to control and manage. This is because knowledge is fragmented into documents, policies, procedures, and other storage mediums. Managing knowledge also presents a challenge for management to retain knowledge in a form that is easily retrievable. This is not an easy task, since the enterprise must first identify the location of all needed knowledge, and second, determine the easiest way to retrieve it (Galup, Dattero & Hicks, 2002). Since KM is required to translate data and information in a meaningful way, KM initiatives are unlikely to be successful unless they are integrated with business strategy, and related to the development of the core capabilities of the organisation (Clarke, 2001). Therefore, the organisations would most likely need to implement organisational policies and process that supports the retention and retrieval of knowledge.

According to Clarke and Rollo (2001), a firm's knowledge or intellectual capital includes three elements: human, customer and structural capital that can be utilised to increase the knowledge capacity of the organisation further. Although a KM process will never replace the value of a twenty year veteran, it can help to mitigate the loss of critical knowledge, methods and best practices and intellectual capital if that person is to leave the organisation (Robb, 2003). Furthermore, since knowledge intensive firms are typically engaged in complex and difficult tasks that cannot be perfectly converted into standardised work procedures and regulations, they are forced to attract and retain qualified people, who can adapt their repertoires to meet the demands of the task (Alvesson, Kärreman & Sveningsson, 2001). Therefore, companies would have to have the determination to acquire, create, develop and share new knowledge among their own employees in order to improve the knowledge already available in the

organisation (Labich & Graves, 1993; Maccoby, 1996; Stewart & Curry, 1997).

Although it is easy to discuss managing knowledge and creating conducive environments for KM, there are many challenges involved in managing knowledge and there is no guarantee that the process or system will work without efficient implementation. But how does an organisation know that they have a viable working system? There really is no means to measure the effectiveness of KM but one of the suggested methods of measuring effectiveness of KM is the end of the pipeline, producing things that are ready to generate revenue. These can include new products, extensions of product lines, and new patents or better organisation and utilisation of existing patents (Mullin, 2001). However, the question remains on whether the employees can be persuaded to contribute to the KM of the organisation by willingly sharing their knowledge, efficiently storing, manipulating, and utilising the learned knowledge within the company. KM is a complex and problematic aspect of knowledge and the success of KM within an organisation depend very much on a variety of issues. These issues ranging from what knowledge is needed within the company to how the company will efficiently retrieve knowledge already stored within the organisation need to be taken into account when considering any systems or processes that would help in the KM of the organisation.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The subjects for this research were four UK-based companies from four different industries i.e. the Architecture industry, the Telecommunications industry, the Oil and Gas industry and the Pharmaceutical industry which are renamed for anonymity; Build Co., Phone Co., Oil Co., and Bio Co. respectively. The reason for the chosen industries was to look at companies that use different levels of explicit and tacit knowledge within their organisations and compare them with each other regarding their management of knowledge. Build Co. would probably use more tacit knowledge in their creative element of designing buildings while Bio Co. and Oil Co. would use more explicit knowledge as they would be utilising more technological knowledge that followed certain theoretical frameworks. In the case of Tel Co., it would be a combination of both tacit and explicit knowledge when they create new technological breakthroughs in telecommunications. These companies were also chosen as they were among the leading companies in their respective fields and when contacted, were found to be in the midst of either designing or implementing knowledge management strategies in the workplace.

The data for this paper was gathered through a series of Semi-Structured Interviews with various members of management within the four companies. The respondents include Line Managers, Project Managers,

Office Managers and the Managing Directors. The questions asked during the interviews include the implementation of policies and procedures that utilises, assists, supports or encourages KM within the organisations. The results of these interviews are provided in the following section.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

With the onset of globalisation, organisations within the UK are facing increasing competition not only from other UK based companies but also from other multinational companies that have branches in the UK. This situation is highlighted by Smith (1998) who states that with the creation of the EU, other European based companies are given much easier access to set up companies in the UK.

The organisations involved in the research recognise the need for KM to be able to utilise the knowledge effectively within the company. Due to the highly competitive nature of the four respective industries where they are competing to offer services and products to their clients, all the companies interviewed voice their concerns for trying to stay afloat. Although the companies are from different backgrounds and industries, all of them realise that KM is important for the efficient overall running of the organisation. This is inline with a quote from Thompson, Warhurst, and Callaghan (2000) who mention that knowledge work requires proficient employment relationships and task structures that allow for creative application, manipulation or extension of that knowledge.

The results gathered from the research indicated that although there are no formally recognised KM strategies within any of the organisations, each of the organisations have individual methods of knowledge acquisition, idea review, creation of knowledge, retention of the employees' knowledge as well as the dissemination of knowledge to other members of staff and to their respective clients. Rather than having one formal process that covers all the aspects of KM from acquiring to disseminating knowledge, the companies have a series of smaller processes that cover each aspect of the KM strategy.

Both Build Co. and Tel Co. utilise their formal systems of idea review (the 'Three-Wave System' and the 'New Idea Scheme' respectively) as a means for acquiring and reviewing ideas suggested by their employees. Both these systems give employees the opportunity to submit their ideas and have them formally reviewed for further progression into a new product, service or just new knowledge. Unfortunately, Bio Co. and Oil Co. do not have any formal methods of reviewing new ideas from the staff other than Bio Co. implementing it in the R&D division of their company. Oil Co. do place suggestion boxes around their company for people to submit ideas but it is done in a casual manner and not very much

encouraged. Furthermore, the ideas placed in the suggestion box are not stored in any database that could be kept for later use. With Build Co. and Tel Co., the systems implemented give them the opportunity for storing ideas even if it is not being progressed further into a service or product. Furthermore, Build Co. also has an extensive filing system where every document, memo and designs of each project is categorically numbered and stored. This helps the employees of Build Co. to review every step of the project process to anticipate any possible problems and plan changes to future designs in order to cut cost and time.

Besides the formal idea review processes and the filing systems, there are other methods of KM that the organisations are utilising, ranging from 'Coaching Systems' (Build Co.) whereby experts of various technical fields would sit down to discuss problems related to each project, to the 'Personal Performance Programme' (Oil Co.) where employees are encouraged to gain specialised knowledge and plan their career development. Overall, these practices could help the management team to organise and utilise the knowledge of their employees more efficiently.

The construction industry is becoming more diverse with companies offering clients a one-stop service for all the clients' needs from architectural drawings, to quantity surveying, right down to maintenance management once the project is completed (Ibelings, 1998). Since Build Co. does not offer a full service as in other architecture and construction firms, it may be possible that through effective knowledge utilisation and with further training of the employees, Build Co. might be able to offer more management services to the customers in order to remain competitive within the architectural industry. This is where the 'Three-Wave System' and the 'Coaching System' of Build Co. comes into play. The systematic review of new ideas and group discussions throughout the project process helps Build Co. to come up with new ideas and products that could be in demand by the clients as well as find new ways to cut costs and time. Furthermore, Build Co. could then compile the ideas that their employees are generating and publish it as a report for their clients as a way of sharing their knowledge.

In the case of the telecommunication and the pharmaceutical industries, both are very much dependent on the changing technology and time frames. In the telecommunications industry, what used to be months or years before a new telecommunication product is released, is now a matter of weeks when an upgrade is available. Whereas in the pharmaceutical industry, it is estimated that it would take between seven and fifteen years as well as more than £300 million to develop a new drug (Fenn, 2002). Although the products in the telecommunications industry are constantly updated in a matter of weeks and those at the pharmaceutical company are facing a time-line of a few

years, the intense competition to be the first to produce a new product is increasing the pressure on the companies to remain competitive. Tel Co. is being forced to constantly evolve technically, specifically in the engineering department to remain stable within the market forces. This need for constant technical evolution is due to the deregulation of the telecommunications industry where there are more telecommunication companies now than there are 10 years ago (Fenn, 2002). This is a similar situation faced by Bio Co., which is focusing most of their attention on their R&D unit by having an effective idea review procedure within that unit. Both the 'New Idea Scheme' at Tel Co. and the review procedure by Bio Co. are there to assist employees in contributing ideas as well as sharing their knowledge. However, the lack of opportunity to propose and review ideas within Bio Co. from other employees could be a loss for the organisation in terms of possible products that might be valuable in the market place especially when "blockbuster" drugs can generate sales worth billions of pounds (Fenn, 2002). In addition, there are no guarantees that there would be success of a drug at the end of the investment as only one percent of all research would end in a marketable drug (Caines, 1995). Therefore, it would be wise for Bio Co. to extend their formal idea review board in the R&D unit to the rest of the company to encourage employees to contribute ideas.

Moreover, the issue of time and cost in either producing a new technological update or a new drug are affecting both Tel Co. and Bio Co. They are being pressured by market forces to produce and create products that are marketable within a shorter period of time and with lower costs. Tel Co. is trying to overcome the competition through the use of the CV system where the skills and expertise of the employees are listed. Through the CV system, Tel Co. hopes that any employee wanting to gain more information regarding a specific subject would be able to search for a particular expert by using the CV and from the initial connection, would be able to collaborate between departments on a variety of projects. As for Bio Co., the length of time it takes for the process from idea to actual marketable product, along with the product protection via the patent of twenty years (Taggart, 1993), has made Bio Co. issue a policy whereby all scientists must maintain a log book that is updated regularly. Through the upkeep of lab books, Bio Co. hope to discover possible products for future manufacturing while conducting research in other fields. However, it is found that Bio Co. could still improve on their KM process as there is only submission of ideas but no competent systematic storage or utilisation of the knowledge within the organisation. The information that could be gained from the lab books and review of ideas are not catalogued or filed. Neither are they shared with other members of the organisation on a regular basis. Thus, the information does not get spread to other parts of the organisation and just stays in one place. Therefore, although Tel Co. and

Bio Co. are trying to manage the knowledge of their employees through a series of policies and processes in order to utilise as much knowledge as they can to stay one step ahead of the game, there are still certain elements of their strategies that could be improved.

The situation with Oil Co. is slightly different from that of the other companies. In recent times, Oil Co. is facing a number of challenges within the organisation where they have to focus more on the work involved rather than the KM process in order to survive the competition. Although the management of Oil Co. admits to the benefits of having such a KM process, they are facing difficulties in implementing any strategy for managing the knowledge of their employees due to their priority in keeping on top of the challenges they are facing. Furthermore, Oil Co. states that it is difficult to implement a programme when they do not have a value attached to it. The concept of value and what creates value are issues raised by Bowman and Ambrosini (2000) and Jacques (2000) and to Oil Co., the truth of the matter is that numbers and financial value play a big role in whether or not a system will be implemented. The only way Oil Co. could implement a KM strategy is to identify where the main areas of benefit and efficiency would be through having a KM process. However, this is a rather difficult process since knowledge is such an abstract entity and therefore, difficult to quantify (Sbarcea, 2001). Therefore, Oil Co. has some difficulty in trying to convince their head office that having a KM strategy would be beneficial for them.

Although Oil Co. does not have any formal review board, they do offer peer review and feedback for any ideas that might be suggested by the employees through department meetings and discussion with employees. In addition, Oil Co. also implement a 'Personal Performance Programme' where the employee is reviewed on the job they are doing, the responsibilities involved with the job, the knowledge they have and knowledge they should obtain to further their career. Even if this is not considered as a KM process by Oil Co., it can be used as a basis for managing the knowledge of employees by identifying what knowledge is needed and then from there, move on to gain the necessary knowledge and utilise it. Since Oil Co. is also involved in the production of petrochemicals, gaps in the knowledge for petrochemical and gas production could be focused on to gain more knowledge regarding the subject matter especially when petrochemicals are fast becoming a valuable commodity in Europe and the rest of the world (Bower, 1986).

Oil Co. also compiles sets of information or rules for their staff and clients to work safely and with confidence on offshore platforms and other parts of the production plant. Oil Co. prepares these guidelines with the hope of reducing the possibility of mistakes and costs that could occur during an accident. This practice is supported by Beckett (2003) who indicates that there

is a rise in operating costs that reflect the heavy expenditure by oil and gas companies on safety issues following the Piper Alpha disaster. Furthermore, due to pressure from environmental and political groups, Oil Co. also has to consider the environmental health and safety issues surrounding oil and gas production as this could lead to added costs if failed to take under control (Wiggin, 2001). Therefore, Oil Co. is taking into consideration the various factors to try and implement certain practices that although could not be officially called KM processes, would at least help to manage the knowledge of their employees more effectively and efficiently.

Besides utilising management practices to efficiently utilise the knowledge of the employees, all of the organisations, except Bio Co., have and are utilising the intranet to varying degrees. Build Co. is trying to set up the e-mails of their employees via the intranet. Furthermore, Build Co. want their employees to work through the intranet where every memo, document or drawing designed by the employee would be automatically saved in the intranet. Tel Co. has set up community based intranet systems that is separate to the company wide intranet. Although Tel Co. would like to link all the different community intranets together, there is a fear that each department would be overloaded with unnecessary information. Despite the fact that Tel Co. might be losing out on potential information from different departments, they indicate that if there is information that could be relevant to other members of the organisation, they would encourage the employee to contribute to the company wide intranet. In the case of Oil Co., they use their intranet predominantly for communications. Also, Oil Co. admits that they do not use the intranet as a medium for discussions and exchanging ideas. The intranet in Oil Co. is more a storage for information without the efficient retrieval of information. If utilised effectively, the intranet can be a strong basis for a KM process within the organisations as Fox (2002) states that time and money can be saved from having to ask the same questions over again when the answer can be searched for within the system. Despite advancements of enabling technologies, organisations must try to avoid the risk of concentrating too much on the IT aspect of KM and focus on the actual management of the knowledge from the employees and within the organisation (Liebman, 2001).

So it could be noted that although all the companies do not have a formal strategy, they do try to implement specific policies and procedures that could assist the management teams in monitoring, managing and utilising the knowledge of their employees. In addition, the changes within the global market as well as within the industry itself are encouraging employees of the companies to take the opportunity to become more knowledgeable in a variety of skills and expertise to cater to the constant changing demands of the customers. Therefore, by utilising the various KM

processes that are in place within their companies, management teams do try to acquire, utilise and encourage the efficient management of their employees' knowledge.

Despite the good intentions of the organisations in trying to maintain some level of KM within the organisation, there are a few limitations faced by the companies in relation to the management of knowledge. For one thing, although the idea review system exists within the companies, only a select few members of management have the opportunity to review or comment on the ideas submitted. By restricted the number of employees in discussing the ideas, the companies are isolating a large number of employees who could further build upon the ideas suggested. Another problem being faced by the organisations is the lack of time to focus on all of the ideas or even on the various aspects of KM and trying to find ways to link the different policies and processes to form one complete KM strategy. Some companies were not even aware that the policies that exist within their companies could be utilised to create a KM process. Furthermore, due to other company matters, management have not been able to fully contribute financially, time wise or with staff resources in order to implement a KM strategy in their organisations. Many employees are also reluctant to contribute to the KM strategy as it takes them away from their work and this reduces the potential utilisation of KM within the companies.

Moreover, it is found that the companies would utilise training schemes, a flexible reward system as well as a fair salary scheme that is benchmarked with the current market to help manage and maintain the knowledge base within the company. The employees view training as a step in their career progression and therefore are encouraged to remain in the company if they knew that the company would give them time off as well as pay for some of the training as long as it is beneficial to the organisation in the long-run. Furthermore, a reward system that appreciates and shows recognition of the efforts of the employees either in fair monetary or non-monetary terms helps to motivate the employees to remain loyal and contribute to the KM process within the organisation. Therefore, this paper shows that although the HR support systems are in the background to the KM strategy and not directly involved in encouraging employees to contribute to the knowledge base within the company, they do play a large role in the overall management of knowledge within the company by retaining the employees' services as well as motivating them to get more involved in gaining more knowledge for the survival of the company in the competitive job market.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This paper looked at how knowledge in an organisation is managed in the workplace. This ability to manage

knowledge is important and has become a source of power for organisations (Buhler, 2001; Jacques, 2000; Galup et. al., 2002). It is found that a variety of policies and procedures exist within these companies in different degrees of formality that can be utilised as a KM strategy within the organisations. These organisations do not necessarily need to invest heavily in state-of-the-art technological software or systems to help in the management of knowledge. Simply by reviewing ideas of the employees, reviewing the process of each project or work done as well as talking to the employees regarding their career progression can go a long way in managing the knowledge of the employees. Furthermore, by storing information efficiently and having effective retrieval of data and knowledge could help the organisations remain competitive in the marketplace. Employees will also have the opportunity to share information and ideas as well as communicate with other employees regarding new knowledge that could be utilised at the workplace. Therefore, the contribution to the research showed that it is through a variety of management styles as well as existing policies and procedures that knowledge is managed in the company. Effective management still stems from efficient and creative management of employees and communication between management and employees is very important in the KM process. Furthermore, by offering non-monetary rewards to employees and providing access to training that the employees desire could also be methods utilised by companies to encourage employees to contribute to the KM strategy. It is hoped that through this paper, organisations would realise that they do not need to invest in expensive technological systems but that through the various soft-skills management and support systems, they can manage and maintain the knowledge base of their employees and their company effectively.

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